

Stuck

IN A RUT

IF YOUR CAREER ISN'T GOING THE WAY YOU'D LIKE IT TO YOU MIGHT BE IN A CAREER RUT. HERE ARE THE SIGNS YOU'RE IN ONE, [HOW TO GET OUT AND SOME OF THE UNEXPECTED WAYS YOU MAY BE CONTRIBUTING TO IT YOURSELF](#)

BY ERIN COE

WE'VE ALL HAD BAD days at the office. While these are completely normal, what if you've noticed that your bad days are turning into bad weeks? That your Sunday blues have begun to spiral out of control at the thought of Monday? Perhaps you've even felt a tinge of jealousy when your bestie talks about her thriving career. These are telltale signs that you could be in a career rut. But don't despair, career ruts can happen to anyone. Just because you started your job inspired and ready to take on the world, doesn't mean you won't find yourself uninspired and unfulfilled a few months, or years, later. The good news? We know what to do to get out them. But first, here are three signs that you could be in one.

You're bored

...so bored. This is one of the biggest signs that you may be in a rut, career coach Penny Holburn says. 'If you're bored, you're unlikely to be learning,

growing or improving your skills,' she says. 'And if you're not doing that, then you're not staying relevant and your career is not moving forward.' And if that's the case you need to get out of this rut before you do actual damage to your career.

You dread coming to work

It's Sunday night and instead of enjoying the 8pm movie, you're dreading the week ahead. 'The Sunday blues are real', Penny explains. 'And if you're struggling with them, then it's often a very good indicator that you need to get out of your job.' After all, your job should be rewarding, enjoyable and give you a sense of accomplishment. You should see it as a stepping stone to a promising career path; not something you dread doing each day.

Your health and well-being are taking a hit

Your rut might be career related, but

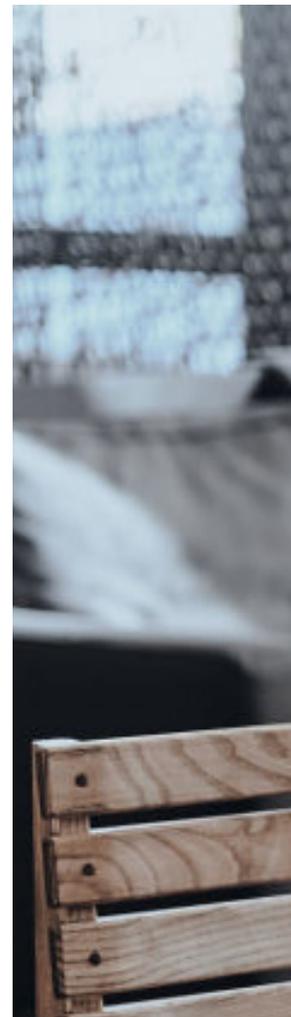
don't be surprised when it starts affecting other areas of your life. According to Penny, here are a few signs that may indicate you're in a rut: you no longer have any time to exercise; you live on junk food and takeouts; you drink a lot of caffeine; you don't prioritise 'me time'; you are constantly tired and often ill. Ringing any bells?

So, now you know that you're in a rut. What's next? How do you get out of one?

Identify exactly what's wrong

You know you don't like your job, but what is it specifically that you don't like? 'You need to take the time to figure out exactly what's bothering you, otherwise you could end up making changes that don't resolve the problem,' Penny explains. Do you have too much time on your hands? Do you feel overextended? Or are you simply not passionate about your job?

Take on a challenging project





My bad

Sometimes it's our own bad habits that keep us in a rut. Scary thought, isn't it? Here are three unexpected ways you may be contributing to your own rut.

'If you feel stuck, put your hand up for a project you wouldn't normally take on,' Penny suggests. A challenging project will take you out of your comfort zone and, with any luck, will reawaken your passion for your job. And there's an added bonus: management may take notice of you in this new capacity and that could open up some new doors.

Learn something new

Break out of your rut by trying out something new, Penny suggests. 'It will expose you to different people, and different ways of thinking, which will make it easier to get out of your rut,' she explains. 'You could take some online courses that are relevant to your career,' Penny says, 'or even just start a new

hobby outside of work.'

You've stopped networking

Networking is important - and it doesn't matter whether you're looking for a new job somewhere else or a new position in your current company. 'If you don't network, you could miss out on some great opportunities,' Penny explains. 'If you're out of sight, you're out of mind, so you may never advance in your career or get out of your rut.'

You're following the money

Sure, getting a fat paycheck is awesome, but if you're not fulfilled in your job, at some point, that paycheck isn't going to be enough to keep you happy. Not only that, but if you only ever follow the

money you may end up in a situation where all you have are a jumble of skills that aren't at all connected to what you're passionate about, Penny explains. And then what? If you decide you want to follow your passion rather, you now may not have the experience needed to do that.

You're afraid of change

Fact: Whatever we are afraid of, we avoid. 'That is a natural human tendency,' Penny explains. 'If you're afraid of change then you will stay where you are, doing the same thing, year after year.' In short, you'll stay in your rut. And the scary part? As a result of this, you won't learn the skills and gain the experience need to move out of your rut. **EL**